

## Commander Outlines Black Jack's Mission

By Spc. Al Barrus  
122nd MPAD

FALLUJAH, Iraq -- Even with the majority of combat operations over and victory declared, elements of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division in Fallujah remain persistent in dealing with the aftermath.

The cavalry brigade's combat power was needed in the 10,000-troop assault on Fallujah named 'Operation Phantom Fury,' according to 2BCT 'Black Jack' commander, Col. Michael Formica.

"We brought the armored protection and mounted combat fire power to the fight," Formica said. "We could penetrate inside the city with the tanks and the Bradleys, take the sniper fires, take the [rocket-propelled grenade] fires and destroy the buildings with direct fire. The key piece we brought was precision combat power with our Abrams and Bradleys."

He said the Black Jack mission now is truly cavalry: noting the fact that his team is tracking down the remaining enemy forces.

"This brigade will have a prominent role in what we consider in cavalry terms, a pursuit operation," he said. "We will hunt down the enemy and destroy him before he can reestablish operations."

"We don't know where the enemy is going. Many of them died in the city, but some may have left, and at this point we are denying him sanctuary," Formica said. "We will continue to track him down and kill or capture him. It's a classic cavalry mission."

Units assigned to the combat team for the operations included many elements outside 2BCT such as 25th Infantry Division's 1st



Photos by Spc. Al Barrus, 122nd MPAD  
(Above) Sgt. Wilen Hopkins, a machine gunner in 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry scans countryside just north of Fallujah. (Right) The 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division colors stand outside brigade headquarters at Camp Fallujah, north of the city. The brigade will continue its cordon mission around the city and help bring humanitarian aide to its people after Operation Phantom Fury.

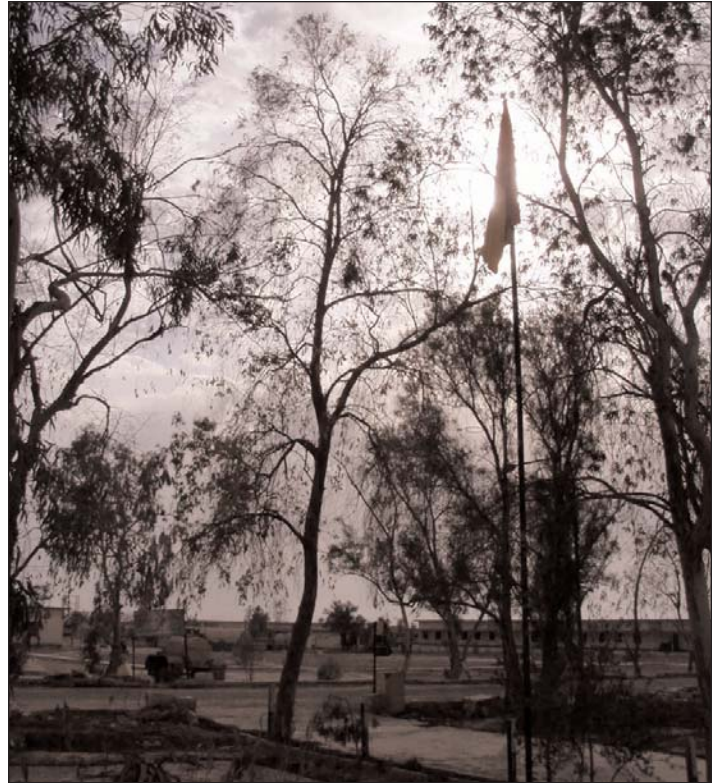
Battalion, 5th Infantry; 2nd Reconnaissance Battalion from 2nd Marine Division and 759th Military Police Battalion.

Second Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment was logistically attached to 2BCT for the operation, and brought cavalry power to the fight in the city. Having the cavalry in the attack was a necessity in Fallujah because the type of enemy they fought here, he said.

"This enemy is well equipped, apparently well trained and well organized," Formica commander said. "They fought us pretty much straight up: a staunch opponent."

"The enemy was trying to get out of the city, but when he couldn't he returned fire; then we had an opportunity to defeat him."

The primary 2BCT mission continues outside the city, taking care of the insurgents who try to escape, the colonel



explained.

"The mission here was to isolate Fallujah so the enemy could not reinforce his positions," Formica said. "Surround the town, keep them in, and keep them out so the 1st Mar Div [Marine Division] could attack the enemy."

Black Jack's commander said many of the attached units who assisted his brigade's cordon mission during the initial assault, which began early November, have since relocated. But as multinational forces round up insurgent hardliners still in Fallujah, 2BCT will remain to keep the cordon around the city.

Three days into the operation, 25th Infantry Division's 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment had to leave the Black Jack cordon mission. The 2BCT 1-5 Cav's combat power has since been stretched,

Formica said.

"We had to spread 1-5 Cav across 55 kilometers and they are doing a fantastic job," the Pennsylvania native said. "They have been there 24-7 for the last ten days. They are holding the line to enable this attack and final operations to be completed."

Once Fallujah and the surrounding Al Anbar province has been liberated, Multi-National Forces will give it back to its people, according to Formica, where they can commence with elections.

"Rebuilding the city will be a big job, but in the end it will belong to the people of Fallujah," Formica said. "All the horrors and all the tortures and all the inhumane things that took place in that city in the last six months are behind them. The rest is physical reconstruction."

# Thankful for Camaraderie Far From Home

Command Sgt. Maj. Neil Ciotola and I would like to take a few minutes to wish every Soldier, Airman, Sailor and Marine serving as a part of Task Force Baghdad a Happy Thanksgiving. Today, American people around the world celebrate this most American of holidays.

Of course, in normal times, this is a holiday synonymous with friends, family and food. In fact, we don't think there is a greater family day than Thanksgiving.

This year's celebration can hold a very different, yet, very special place in your life. It will be a Thanksgiving unlike many that you have every celebrated or may ever again.

Here, we are celebrating together and we should be

**MG Peter Chiarelli**

**1st Cav.  
Div. CG**



thankful for all that we are fighting for: our families, our country, and our way of life. We're helping protect that way of life and allowing generations of Americans to share the magic of Thanksgiving at home.

We can be thankful for that.

We are planning special events and meals in each of our dining facilities to help remind us of the blessings of our nation. We should never

**CSM Neil Ciotola**

**1st Cav.  
Div. CSM**



take those blessings for granted. Command Sgt. Maj. Ciotola and I hope to get around and visit with many of you that day.

We believe that history will show our efforts here will bring greatness to Iraq. In this country of vast potential lies the heart of a nation yearning to build the foundation of freedom and justice.

Each of you understands, and are thankful for, the precious nature of freedom and

justice and you are providing a shining example of the greatness of our nation. Your efforts to improve the lives of Baghdad's citizens are doing more than you can know.

You may not see the improvements we seek during our deployment, but we are confident more Iraqis will associate the big horse patch with all that is good, and will be thankful in their own way.

Like most of you, the command sergeant major and I are thankful for our family and friends in the United States. But we can both say, without hesitation, that we are thankful for each of you and for the privilege of sharing this special American holiday in your presence.

Thank you and God bless you.

**Deadly Practice**



*This ammunition  
was found in a  
dumpster...*

**Proper turn-in  
of unused or  
damaged  
ammunition is  
MANDATORY.**

## Useful Iraqi Words/Phrases

**I don't know why.  
laa adree limazaa.**

**Thursday**  
High: 62  
Low: 42



**Friday**  
High: 63  
Low: 43



**Saturday**  
High: 57  
Low: 40



Weather information provided by 1CD Staff Weather Office (SWO)

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## News Notes

### Baboon Escapes, is Late for Flight

HOUSTON (AP) -- A pregnant baboon escaped from her cage in the cargo area of Bush Intercontinental Airport for a brief time before animal control specialists could capture her. Houston airport spokesman Roger Smith said the baboon, one of a group of primates being flown to a zoo in the San Francisco area, never made it into the passenger area of the airport during the escape. The baboon climbed into the rafters below an elevated terminal concourse. The baboon was subdued and returned to her cage. But she had to take another flight because the first plane had to go on without her.

### No Time to Cook Holiday Dinner?

SEATTLE (Reuters) -- After the startling success of its turkey and gravy-flavored soda during last year's U.S. holiday season, a Seattle soda company will be serving up green beans and casserole, mashed potatoes, fruitcake and cranberry flavors. "Last year, the response to our Turkey and Gravy Soda was overwhelming, but we really didn't have side dishes to go with it," Peter van Stolk, chief executive of specialty soda maker Jones Soda Co., said. The tan-colored turkey and gravy-flavored soda sold out last year in three hours after it was offered on the Web and later fetched prices over \$100 on eBay Inc.

## Elves, Toys Find Home at Fort Hood

FORT HOOD, Texas (Killeen Daily Herald) -- A chorus of uniform clad soldiers, military spouses, Fort Hood volunteers and even a few elves heralded the grand opening of Santa's Workshop in a melodic way Monday.

Joining voices to sing traditional holiday favorites, including "Silent Night" and "Jingle Bells," the chorus brought the season's first peals of laughter to the recently completed "toy store" located at Fort Hood's Tax Center.

"Many people on post do not know how our operation works so this gives us a chance to show off and explain our organization," Santa's Workshop president Bobbi Hennessee said.

Driven by the goal of making sure every Fort Hood child has a gift under the tree come Christmas, Santa's Workshop provides each eligible child two toys and one book and every family a board game.

"We support military families who are financially strapped during the holiday season," Hennessee said. "Our



Killeen Daily Herald

Laurel Klinge, left, and Piper Worley stand next to a room filled with donated stuffed animals during the opening ceremonies for the Santa's Workshop at Fort Hood Monday.

main goal at Santa's Workshop is to see that the children of our soldiers have a smile on their face (this Christmas)."

From an organization in Dallas that calls themselves Toys for Troops to the Harley Owners of Bell County, the surrounding communities have donated thousands of toys to the Santa's Workshop cause.

"It is not news to anyone

here that our soldiers do a great deal for not a lot of money. During this time of the year, the families sometimes bear the pain of those low paychecks in not being able to fully stuff those stockings," Simmons said. "This is an important part of ensuring that (soldiers' children) have an opportunity to experience the full blessings of this nation."

## 20 Arrested in Two Austin Drug Busts

AUSTIN, Texas (Austin American-Statesman) -- For three years Austin police knew about a group of Hondurans operating a drug ring in the city but couldn't infiltrate it.

The problem had nothing to do with the criminals' elaborate business method, which involved stash houses, cell phones and fake IDs.

The department simply didn't have enough



Austin American-Statesman

It might be just a drop in the bucket as far as Austin's drug trade goes, but for Lt. John Colunga, left, and Capt. Doug Kunkel, the guns, marijuana and other drugs seized last week were still a significant find.

Spanish-speaking officers in its organized crime unit, Lt. John Colunga said. Once one became available a few months ago, the case cracked wide open.

The department announced Tuesday that in the past week, police have arrested 17 Honduran citizens in connection with the ring and seized several drugs, including more than a pound of methamphetamines, nearly four pounds of marijuana, 145 grams of crack cocaine and 8 grams of cocaine.

In a separate drug bust, also announced Tuesday, officers found 148 pounds of marijuana at two Manor Road apartments. Three people were arrested.

The drugs seized in both operations make a "very small dent" in the amount of illegal narcotics flowing through Austin, Colunga said.

Still, the Hondurans' drug operation was one of the most elaborate that police had ever encountered, Colunga said.

The suspects stashed drugs in houses and apartments in Austin, east of Interstate 35. They used cell phones to communicate with each other and carried fake ID cards. The leaders of the ring lived quietly with their families in houses where no drugs were kept, police said.

## Denver Tops Short-Handed Nets

DENVER (AP) -- Kenyon Martin ran over and slapped hands with New Jersey coach Lawrence Frank before tipoff, then tried to charge through a double team on the game's first possession.

Think Martin wasn't excited about facing his former team?

Martin had 22 points and 12 rebounds in his first game against New Jersey, and Earl Boykins hit runner with 21 seconds left to lift the Denver Nuggets to a 90-88 victory Tuesday night over the Nets for their fourth straight win.

"I had a good time out there," said Martin. "Obviously, it was different not being on that team, but I have been here long enough that it is not that big of a deal."

New Jersey, with Martin and Kerry Kittles gone and Jason Kidd still out with a sore knee, has its first six-game losing streak since April 2001.

"Whatever was between him and management doesn't affect us here," said Richard



AP

Denver Nuggets forward Kenyon Martin, left, goes up for a shot against New Jersey Nets center Jason Collins, front right, and forward Brian Scalabrine in the fourth quarter of the Nuggets' 90-88 victory in Denver Tuesday.

Jefferson, one of Martin's closest friends on the Nets. "I wish him the best, and I think he will be an All-Star this year and their team will get better."

"I thought our guys gave a

good effort," Frank said. "Especially on the road, you want to put yourselves in a position to win a game down the stretch, and we put ourselves in that position."

## NFL to Experiment with On-Field Seating

NEW YORK (AP) -- A long-planned NFL experiment with on-field seating will begin Sunday with the Jacksonville at Minnesota game. Four field seats for each game will be made available. The host teams, all of which volunteered to conduct the experiment, will choose which fans will sit in chairs located 12 yards from the sideline and not near bench areas. The home teams also will choose exactly where the seats are located.

The other games in the experiment will be the New York Giants at Washington on Dec. 5, Houston at Chicago on Dec. 19 and New England at Miami on Monday night, Dec. 20.

The league is not backing off from the experiment in the wake of the melee between players and fans at last Friday's NBA game in Auburn Hills, Mich. The experiment was proposed more than a year ago and discussed at the owners' meetings last May. A memo to all 32 teams

was sent in August seeking volunteers to conduct the experiment.

"We will use these experiments to evaluate the policies to govern the concept, issues such as security, football operations, broadcast operations, access to concession stands and rest rooms," said NFL spokesman Greg Aiello.

Steve LaCroix, Vikings vice president of sales and marketing, said four corporate sponsors or franchise guests will sit on the visitor's side toward one of the end zones Sunday. They will be partially enclosed in a padded box and will sit on recliners with small TVs and cup holders.

"We have the space at our facility, whereas a lot of other facilities don't," LaCroix said.

LaCroix also said the seats could benefit the Vikings if the NFL goes through with the plan.

"Certainly we're revenue challenged in the Metrodome, so that could be a potential benefit," he said.



### In Brief

#### Rather Resigns from CBS News

NEW YORK (AP) -- Dan Rather, the hard-charging embodiment of CBS News who saw his reputation damaged by an ill-fated report on President Bush's National Guard service, said Tuesday he will step down as "CBS Evening News" anchor in March after nearly a quarter-century in the job. Rather, 73, will become a correspondent for both editions of "60 Minutes," saying he looked forward to "pouring my heart" into investigative reporting. John Roberts and Scott Pelley are frequently mentioned as in-house candidates to succeed him, but CBS News - a distant third in evening news ratings behind NBC and ABC - also will look elsewhere.

#### Nirvana Album Delayed by Love

SEATTLE (AP) -- Nirvana's box set, delayed three years by litigation, was finally released Tuesday, introducing hundreds of thousands of fans to rare recordings and even living-room video of the grunge rockers. The four-disc set, "With the Lights Out," includes 81 tracks, 68 of them previously unreleased. It was initially planned for release in 2001 - for the 10th anniversary of the album "Nevermind" - but a dispute between Courtney Love, the widow of frontman Kurt Cobain, and the surviving bandmates delayed the project. The sides settled their legal issues in September 2002, allowing work on the box set to resume.